

Before the Fair

Do your research:

- Use www.kent.ac.uk/ces/careersfair to find out who will be attending the Fair
- Check their websites to find out what roles they are recruiting for and what they look for in graduates/placement students/interns

Plan your approach:

- Decide what information you need from employers
- Think of questions to ask them
- Prepare an “elevator pitch”
- Put together an up-to-date CV

Find something presentable to wear

- You don't need to wear a suit but think about what you will wear and the impression it will make on potential employers: first impressions count. Casual dress is OK but dirty or tatty clothes definitely aren't!

For more tips on preparation, see **TARGET Jobs** <http://bit.ly/1PRooWE>

Approaching employers

Don't just lurk nervously at the edge of the stand – go up to employers, smile, shake hands and introduce yourself. (Take out your earphones and chewing gum first!)

The “**elevator pitch**” will help you to prepare your introduction – a short sentence or two that will give the employer some key information about you and what you can offer, such as:

“Hello, my name is _____ and I am a _____ year _____ (degree) student. I am interested in a career in the _____ industry as a _____. During my time at Kent I have been involved in _____ (societies, projects, interests, work experience etc.) and developed skills in _____. I'm very interested in _____ and wonder if you could tell me more about it?”

A conversation is a two-way process, so **listen** to what the employer says, **ask questions** and **show interest**.

Don't keep the employer too long if other students are waiting: thank them politely and move on. Make a note of their name and what you talked about – this will be useful to refer to if you later apply to that company. You could also connect with that person on LinkedIn.

Questions to ask

Asking very basic and superficial questions will get you nowhere, so take the chance to show your motivation and insight.

Questions that do this might include:

The work. What are the main areas of responsibility for graduates?

Skills, experience and personal qualities. What is most important to this organisation?

What makes an application stand out?

Training and development. How do graduates progress after they have completed their training?

Their industry and their business. What makes them different from other employers in this sector?

How could you use your specific skills and experience in this company?

“How was it for you?” Many of the people at the Fair will be recent graduates who will be more than happy to talk about their personal experiences